

U.S. destroys last of its declared chemical weapons

By ANDREW DeMILLO, THOMAS PEIPERT and DYLAN LOVAN

Associated Press

RICHMOND, Ky. (AP) — At a sprawling military installation in the middle of the rolling green hills of eastern Kentucky, a milestone was reached Friday in the history of warfare dating back to World War I. Workers at the Blue Grass Army Depot destroyed rockets filled with GB nerve agent that are the last of the United States' declared chemical weapons, and completing a decadeslong campaign to eliminate a stockpile that by the end of the Cold War totaled more than 30,000 tons, Senate Republican leader Mitch McConnell announced.

The weapons' destruction is a major watershed for Richmond, Kentucky and Pueblo, Colorado, where an Army depot destroyed the last of its chemical agents last month. It's also a defining moment for arms control efforts worldwide. The U.S. faced a Sept. 30 deadline to eliminate its remaining chemical weapons under the international Chemical Weapons Convention, which took effect in 1997 and was joined by 193 countries. The munitions being destroyed in Kentucky are the last of 51,000 M55 rockets with GB nerve agent — a deadly toxin also known as sarin — that have been stored at the depot since the 1940s. By destroying the munitions, the U.S. is officially underscoring that these types of weapons are no longer acceptable in the battlefield and sending a message to the handful of countries that haven't joined the agreement, military experts say.

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Canisters of mustard gas, which are part of the United States' chemical weapons stockpile, wait for destruction at the U.S. Army Pueblo Chemical Depot Thursday, June 8, 2023, in Pueblo, Colo. Associated Press

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U.S. destroys last of its declared chemical weapons

Continued from Front

"One thing that we're really proud of is how we're finishing the mission. We're finishing it for good for the United States of America," said Kim Jackson, manager of the Pueblo Chemical Agent-Destruction Pilot Plant. Chemical weapons were first used in modern warfare in World War I, where they were estimated have killed at least 100,000. Despite their use being subsequently banned by the Geneva Convention, countries continued to stockpile the weapons until the treaty calling for their destruction. In southern Colorado, workers at the Army Pueblo Chemical Depot started destroying the weapons in 2016, and on June 22 completed their mission of neutralizing an entire cache of about 2,600 tons of mustard blister agent. The projectiles and mortars comprised about 8.5% of the country's original chemical weapons stockpile of 30,610 tons of agent.

Nearly 800,000 chemical munitions containing mustard agent were stored since the 1950s inside row after row of heavily guarded concrete and earthen bunkers that pock the landscape near a large swath of farmland east of Pueblo. The weapons' destruction alleviates a concern that civic leaders in Colorado and Kentucky admit was always in the back of their minds.

"Those (weapons) sitting out there were not a threat," Pueblo Mayor Nick Gradisar said. But, he added, "you always wondered what might happen with them."

In the 1980s, the community around Kentucky's Blue Grass Army Depot rose up in opposition to the Army's initial plan to incinerate the plant's 520 tons of chemical weapons, leading to a decadeslong battle over how they would be disposed of. They were able to halt the planned incineration plant, and then, with help from lawmakers, prompted the Army to submit alternative methods to



Technicians work to destroy the United States' chemical weapons stockpile at the U.S. Army Pueblo Chemical Depot Thursday, June 8, 2023, in Pueblo, Colo.

Associated Press

burning the weapons.

Craig Williams, who became the leading voice of the community opposition and later a partner with political leadership and the military, said residents were concerned about potential toxic pollution from burning the deadly chemical agents.

Williams noted that the military eliminated most of its existing stockpile by burning weapons at other, more remote sites such as Johnston Atoll in the Pacific Ocean or at a chemical depot in the middle of the Utah desert. But the Kentucky site was adjacent to Richmond and only a few dozen miles away from Lexington, the state's second-largest city.

"We had a middle school of over 600 kids a mile away from the (planned) smokestack," Williams said.

The Kentucky storage facility has housed mustard agent and the VX and sarin nerve agents, much of it inside rockets and other projectiles, since the 1940s. The state's disposal plant was completed in 2015 and

began destroying weapons in 2019. It uses a process called neutralization to dilute the deadly agents so they can be safely disposed of.

The project, however, has been a boon for both communities, and facing the eventual loss of thousands of workers, both are pitching the pool of high-skilled laborers as a plus for companies looking to locate in their regions.

Workers at the Pueblo site used heavy machinery to meticulously — and slowly — load aging weapons onto conveyor systems that fed into secure rooms where remote-controlled robots did the dirty and dangerous work of eliminating the toxic mustard agent, which was designed to blister the skin and cause inflammation of the eyes, nose, throat and lungs.

Robotic equipment removed the weapons' fuses and bursters before the mustard agent was neutralized with hot water and mixed with a caustic solution to prevent the reaction from reversing. The by-

product was further broken down in large tanks swimming with microbes, and the mortars and projectiles were decontaminated at 1,000 degrees Fahrenheit (538 degrees Celsius) and recycled as scrap metal. Problematic munitions that were leaky or overpacked were sent to an armored, stainless steel detonation chamber to be destroyed at about 1,100 degrees Fahrenheit (593 degrees Celsius).

The Colorado and Kentucky sites were the last among several, including Utah and the Johnston Atoll, where the nation's chemical weapons had been stockpiled and destroyed. Other locations included facilities in Alabama, Arkansas and Oregon.

Kingston Reif, an assistant U.S. secretary of defense for threat reduction and arms control, said the destruction of the last U.S. chemical weapon "will close an important chapter in military history, but one that we're very much looking forward to closing."

Officials say the elimina-

tion of the U.S. stockpile is a major step forward for the Chemical Weapons Convention. Only three countries — Egypt, North Korea and South Sudan — have not signed the treaty. A fourth, Israel, has signed but not ratified the treaty. Reif noted that there remains concern that some parties to the convention, particularly Russia and Syria, possess undeclared chemical weapons stockpiles.

Still, arms control advocates hope this final step by the U.S. could nudge the remaining countries to join. But they also hope it could be used as a model for eliminating other types of weapons.

"It shows that countries can really ban a weapon of mass destruction," said Paul F. Walker, vice chairman of the Arms Control Association and coordinator of the Chemical Weapons Convention Coalition. "If they want to do it, it just takes the political will and it takes a good verification system." □

Jimmy and Rosalynn Carter mark 77th wedding anniversary at home in Plains, Georgia

By **BILL BARROW**
Associated Press

ATLANTA (AP) — Jimmy and Rosalynn Carter are marking their 77th wedding anniversary with a quiet Friday at their south Georgia home, extending their record as the longest-married first couple ever as both nonagenarians face significant health challenges. The 39th president is 98 and has been in home hospice care since February. The former first lady is 95 and has dementia. The Carter family has not offered details of either Jimmy or Rosalynn Carter's condition but has said they both have enjoyed time with each other and a stream of family members, along with occasional visits from close friends, in recent months.

"As we have looked back at their legacy, it has been really wonderful to see the outpouring of support and respect and love," grandson Jason Carter said recently. "That word love is really the one that defines certainly their personal relationship, but also the way they approach this world." Jimmy and Rosalynn Carter have been on the American and international stage together for a half-century. What they described as "full partnership"



Former President Jimmy Carter and his wife former first lady Rosalynn Carter sit together during a reception to celebrate their 75th wedding anniversary Saturday, July 10, 2021, in Plains, Ga.

Associated Press

began years earlier in the Carter family farm business before his political career and their decades of global humanitarian work since leaving the White House in 1981 and establishing The Carter Center the following year.

Through the center, Jimmy Carter conducted multiple diplomatic missions, working with the blessings of his Oval Office successors, even as he sometimes rankled them. The former

president and center employees have monitored at least 114 elections across Asia, Africa and the Americas since 1989. They have recently turned their efforts to U.S. elections.

Among their public health outreach, the center's Guinea worm eradication program has nearly conquered the water-borne parasite once prevalent in the developing world. Known cases measured in the millions in the mid-1980s

when Jimmy Carter set a goal of eradicating Guinea worm disease.

There were fewer than two dozen cases in 2022 and, as of earlier this spring, the center had yet to document a case in 2023. Rosalynn Carter, meanwhile, took her signature policy issue mental health treatment and advocacy beyond the White House and established an annual fellowship for journalists to concentrate on mental

health reporting. She also advocated widely for better services for caregivers, a focus the Carter family highlighted earlier this year when they announced the former first lady had dementia.

Beyond the Carter Center, the couple became the most famous volunteers for Habitat for Humanity, the international outfit that builds, repairs and renovates homes for low-income people. The Carters first volunteered for Habitat in 1984, taking a bus from Georgia to the New York City worksite along with other volunteers. They would soon begin hosting annual builds bearing the former president's name, donning hardhats with volunteers into their late 80s and early 90s.

"Everything they've done is really just an extension of what they started and who they were in the White House," said Donna Brazile, a former Democratic Party chairwoman who got her start in politics on Carter's presidential campaigns. "Jimmy and Rosalynn Carter are just good, decent people."

The Carters married July 7, 1946, in their hometown of Plains. But their relationship extends to the cradle. □

Rudy Giuliani should be disbarred for false election fraud claims

By **NOMAAN MERCHANT**
Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — A review panel says former New York Mayor Rudolph Giuliani should be disbarred in Washington for how he handled litigation challenging the 2020 election on behalf of then-President Donald Trump. Giuliani "claimed massive election fraud but had no evidence," wrote the three-lawyer panel in a report released Friday that goes through the errors and unsupported claims in a Pennsylvania lawsuit he argued seeking to overturn the Republican president's

loss to Democrat Joe Biden. Between Election Day and the Jan. 6, 2021, riot at the U.S. Capitol, Giuliani and other Trump lawyers repeatedly pressed claims of election fraud that were almost uniformly rejected by federal and state courts. He's the third lawyer who could lose his ability to practice law over what he did for Trump: John Eastman faces disbarment in California, and Lin Wood this week surrendered his license in Georgia.

"Mr. Giuliani's effort to undermine the integrity of the 2020 presidential election has helped destabilize our

democracy," wrote the three lawyers on the panel, Robert C. Bernius, Carolyn Haynesworth-Murrell and Jay A. Brozost.

The panel's report will now go to the D.C. Court of Appeals for a final decision. Ted Goodman, a political adviser to Giuliani, criticized the panel's work as "the sort of behavior we'd expect out of the Soviet Union." "I call on rank-and-file members of the DC Bar Association to speak out against this great injustice," Goodman said in a statement. Giuliani's law license in New York was suspended in June 2021 for false

statements he made while trying to pursue Trump's re-

peatedly debunked fraud claims. □



Rudy Giuliani speaks with reporters as he departs the federal courthouse, Friday, May 19, 2023, in Washington.

Associated Press

Truck makers pledge to comply with new California rules

By ADAM BEAM

Associated Press

SACRAMENTO, Calif. (AP) —

Some of the nation's largest truck makers on Thursday pledged to stop selling new gas-powered vehicles in California by the middle of the next decade, part of an agreement with state regulators aimed at preventing lawsuits that threatened to delay or block the state's emission standards. California is trying to rid itself of fossil fuels, passing new rules in recent years to phase out gas-powered cars, trucks, trains and lawn equipment in the nation's most populous state.

It will take years before all of those rules fully take effect. But already some industries are pushing back. Last month, the railroad industry sued the California Air Resources Board to block new rules that would ban older locomotives and require companies to purchase zero-emission equipment.

Thursday's announcement means lawsuits are less likely to delay similar rules for the trucking industry. The companies agreed to follow California's rules, which include banning the sale of new gas-powered trucks by 2036. In the meantime, California regulators agreed to loosen some of



Trucks line up to enter a Port of Oakland shipping terminal on Nov. 10, 2021, in Oakland, Calif.

Associated Press

their emission standards for diesel trucks. The state agreed to use the federal emission standard starting in 2027, which is lower than what the California rules would have been.

California regulators also agreed to let these companies continue to sell more older diesel engines over the next three years, but only if they also sell zero-emission vehicles to offset the emissions from those older trucks.

The agreement also clears the way for other states to adopt California's same standards without worrying about whether the rules would be upheld in court,

said Steven Cliff, executive officer of the California Air Resources Board. That means more trucks nationally would follow these rules. Cliff said about 60% of the truck vehicle miles traveled in California come from trucks that arrive from other states.

"I think that this sets the stage for a national framework for zero emission trucks," Cliff said. "It's a really stringent California-only rule, or a slightly less stringent national rule. We still win in the national scenario."

The agreement includes some of the largest truck makers in the world, includ-

ing Cummins Inc., Daimler Truck North America, Ford Motor Company, General Motors Company, Hino Motors Limited Inc, Isuzu Technical Center of America Inc., Navistar Inc, Paccar Inc., Stellantis NV, and Volvo Group North America. The agreement also includes the Truck and Engine Manufacturing Association.

"This agreement enables the regulatory certainty we all need to prepare for a future which will include ever increasing volumes of low and zero-emissions technologies," said Michael Noonan, director of product certification and com-

pliance for Navistar.

Heavy-duty trucks like big rigs and buses use diesel engines, which are more powerful than gasoline engines but also produce much more pollution. California has lots of these trucks that ferry freight to and from the ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach, two of the busiest ports in the world.

While these trucks make up 3% of vehicles on the road, they account for more than half of nitrogen oxides and fine particle diesel pollution, according to the California Air Resources board. It's had a big impact on California cities. Of the top 10 most ozone-polluted cities in the U.S., six are in California, according to the American Lung Association. Mariela Ruacho, clean air advocacy manager for the American Lung Association, said the agreement is "great news" that "shows California is a leader when it comes to clean air."

But Ruacho said she wants to know how the agreement will change estimates of health benefits for Californians. The rules regulators adopted in April included an estimated \$26.6 billion in health care savings from fewer asthma attacks, emergency room visits and other respiratory illnesses. □

Baltimore police arrest 17-year-old suspect in block party shooting

BALTIMORE (AP) — Authorities have arrested and charged a teen who detectives believe was involved in a mass shooting at a Baltimore block party over the holiday weekend that left two people dead and 28 others wounded, officials announced Friday. Members of the homicide and SWAT teams arrested the 17-year-old boy around 7 a.m. Friday after a search warrant was executed at a home, police said in a news release. He was taken to the Central Booking Intake Facility, where he was charged with possession of a firearm by a minor and possession of an assault weapon, as well as reckless

endangerment and having a handgun in a vehicle, police said. Police referred

to the teen in the release as a person of interest. He is charged as an adult,

but police aren't identifying him since he is a minor, according to department spokesperson Detective Freddie Talbert.

Detectives are still actively investigating the shooting in the Brooklyn Homes area in the southern part of the city, Talbert said. A reward for up to \$28,000 is being offered for any information that leads to an arrest and charges in the case.

There was a wave of shootings this week as the U.S. celebrated the Fourth of July. The gun violence that flared this week in Washington, D.C.; Louisiana; Florida; Pennsylvania; Texas; Maryland and Massachusetts left more than a dozen

dead and more than 60 wounded — including children as young as 2 years old.

Earlier this week, interim Baltimore Police Commissioner Richard Worley said that investigators believed there were multiple shooters in the block party shooting, and that it wasn't clear if the shooting was targeted or random. "We don't know exactly how many, but we do know more than one person was shooting," Worley said. The event has been held for decades, but no permit was issued this year and police didn't find out about it ahead of time, as they have in past years, Worley said. □



A police officer stands in the area of a mass shooting incident in the Southern District of Baltimore, Sunday, July 2, 2023.

Associated Press

Dutch media say the government failed to agree on migration laws

By MIKE CORDER

Associated Press

THE HAGUE, Netherlands (AP) — Tense talks among the four parties in Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte's ruling bloc have failed to broker a deal over ways to rein in migration, Dutch media reported Friday, citing unnamed sources. That would likely mean the collapse of the ruling coalition. The failure of months of talks on the thorny issue could now force a general election. The government didn't confirm the reports and no ministers immediately emerged from the meeting near Rutte's office, but an extra meeting of Rutte's Cabinet was hastily arranged for later Friday.

"We talked for a long time, we are coming here tonight because we did not succeed," Defense Minister Kajsa Ollongren told reporters as she walked into the Cabinet meeting. Other ministers arriving for the meeting did not confirm that the failure of the talks had led to the collapse of the government. But opposition lawmakers wasted no time in calling for fresh elections. Geert Wilders, leader of the anti-immigration Party for Freedom, tweeted, "Quick elections now." Jesse Klaver, leader of the Green Left party also called for



Netherlands' Prime Minister Mark Rutte speaks during a press conference at the Serbia Palace, in Belgrade, Serbia, on July 3, 2023.

elections and told Dutch broadcaster NOS: "This country needs a change of direction."

Rutte, the Netherlands' longest serving premier, presided over late-night meetings Wednesday and Thursday that failed to result in a deal. More talks got underway Friday evening, and he declined to answer questions about the issue at his weekly press conference before the discussions.

"Everybody wants to find a good, effective solution that also does justice to the fact that this is about human lives," Finance Minister

Sigrid Kaag, a member of the centrist D66 party, said before the talks began.

The discussions have underscored ideological divisions in the coalition between the partner parties that do not support a strict crackdown on migration. D66 and fellow centrist party ChristenUnie, or Christian Union, and the two that favor tougher measures: Rutte's conservative People's Party for Freedom and Democracy and the Christian Democrats.

The coalition has tried for months to hash out a deal to reduce the flow of new migrants arriving in the

country of nearly 18 million people. Proposals reportedly include creating two classes of asylum: a temporary one for people fleeing conflicts and a permanent one for people trying to escape persecution and reducing the number of family members who are allowed to join asylum-seekers in the Netherlands. "We've been working at this for a long time, and all the information is on the table. We have to look together to see if we can make something of it," Justice Minister Dilan Yeşilgöz-Zegerius, a member of Rutte's party, said ahead

of the latest round of talks. Last year, hundreds of asylum-seekers were forced to sleep outdoors in squalid conditions near an overcrowded reception center as the number of people arriving in the Netherlands outstripped the available beds. Dutch aid agencies provided assistance.

Just over 21,500 people from outside Europe sought asylum in the Netherlands in 2022, according to the country's statistics office. Tens of thousands more moved to the Netherlands to work and study.

The numbers have put a strain on housing that already was in short supply in the densely populated country.

Rutte's government has worked for a law that could compel municipalities to provide accommodations for newly arrived asylum-seekers, but the legislation has yet to pass through both houses of parliament. The prime minister also has promoted European Union efforts to slow migration to the 27-nation bloc. Rutte visited Tunisia last month with his Italian counterpart and the president of the EU's executive commission to offer more than 1 billion euros in financial aid to rescue the North African nation's teetering economy and to stem migration from its shores to Europe. □

China says up to U.S. to create 'necessary conditions' for anti-drugs cooperation

BEIJING (AP) — China on Friday insisted it is up to the U.S. to "create necessary conditions" for anti-drugs cooperation, following complaints from Washington that Beijing has ignored its calls for a crackdown on precursor chemicals for the highly addictive painkiller fentanyl. China takes an "active part in international anti-narcotic cooperation and firmly opposes smears and unilateral sanctions on other countries under the pretext of the fight against drugs," Foreign

Ministry spokesperson Wang Wenbin said at a daily briefing. "We urge the U.S. to correct wrongdoings with concrete actions and create necessary conditions for the two countries' anti-narcotic cooperation," Wang said. U.S. diplomats and anti-drug officials have repeatedly complained that China has ignored calls for closer cooperation on combating the production and sale of fentanyl precursor chemicals. Wang gave no details on the source of Chinese dis-

content or what conditions it was looking for. However, Washington and Beijing are at odds on a wide-range of issues, from trade to Taiwan and U.S. sanctions against the Chinese defense minister. China was also deeply angered by a decision late last month by the U.S. Justice Department to file criminal charges against four Chinese companies and eight individuals for allegedly trafficking the chemicals used to make fentanyl in the United States and Mexico. □



A bag of 4-fluoro isobutyryl fentanyl which was seized in a drug raid is displayed at the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) Special Testing and Research Laboratory in Sterling, Va., on Aug. 9, 2016.

Associated Press

U.N. nuclear agency seeks more access to the plant that Kyiv and Moscow say is under threat

By **MARI YAMAGUCHI**

Associated Press

TOKYO (AP) — The head of the United Nations nuclear agency said Friday he was pushing for access to the rooftops of reactors at the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant in Ukraine, where Ukrainian officials accused Russia of planting explosives.

Russia in turn accused Ukraine of planning to sabotage the plant. Neither side has provided any evidence for their claims of an imminent threat.

The plant was seized by Russia in March 2022, in the first weeks of the war in Ukraine, raising fears of a nuclear accident. The Russians have cited security concerns in granting only limited access to officials from the International Atomic Energy Agency.

Wrapping up a four-day visit to Japan, IAEA Director General Rafael Mariano Grossi told The Associated Press that the IAEA had recently gained access to more of the site, including the cooling pond and fuel storage areas.

The Ukrainians had said those areas were mined by the Russians, but the IAEA found they were not, Grossi said. "It's like a conversation, and I'm pushing to get



Rafael Mariano Grossi, Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency, arrives for an interview with The Associated Press at a hotel in Tokyo, Japan, Friday, July 7, 2023.

Associated Press

as much access as possible," he said,

"I'm optimistic that we are going to be able to go up and see" the rooftops of the reactors.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy alleged Tuesday, citing intelligence reports, that Russian troops placed "objects resembling explosives" atop several power units to "simulate" an attack as part of a false flag operation. The "foreign objects" were placed on the roof of the plant's third

and fourth power units, the General Staff of Ukraine's armed forces said.

In Russia, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov this week called the situation at the nuclear plant, which is Europe's largest, "quite tense," and accused Kyiv of planning an attack.

The U.N. atomic watchdog has repeatedly warned of the possibility of a radiation catastrophe like the one at Chernobyl, about 300 miles to the northwest, where a reactor exploded in 1986.

The Zaporizhzhia plant has been shelled numerous times since the war began. Regular power outages have made it impossible to operate the plant safely, and its six reactors have been shut down to minimize the threat of a disaster. "These reactors are designed to withstand the type of implosions from a plane crash, and there is a belief that they would withstand shelling for example," said Patricia Lewis, research director of conflict, science

and transformation at the London-based think tank Chatham House.

Grossi said the IAEA had modeled the possible environmental impact of an explosion or bombing at the plant. "You have enough nuclear material to create quite a disastrous situation in the worst scenario, but then there are different alternatives that could happen," he said.

The IAEA has officials stationed at the plant, which is still run by its Ukrainian staff. Grossi spoke Friday after a visit to the tsunami-wrecked Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant, where equipment has been installed for the planned release of treated radioactive water into the Pacific Ocean.

The government and TEPCO, the plant's operator, say the water must be removed to prevent any accidental leaks and make room for the plant's decommissioning, and hope to start releasing the water this summer.

Japanese regulators on Friday granted TEPCO a permit to release the water. In its final assessment report, issued Tuesday, the IAEA endorsed the plan, saying any environmental and health impact would be negligible. □

Thousands take part in first running of the bulls in Spain's San Fermin festival

By **ÁLVARO BARRIENTOS**

Associated Press

PAMPLONA, Spain (AP) — Thousands of thrill seekers took part Friday in the first running of the bulls at the San Fermín festival in the northern Spanish city of Pamplona.

Several runners took knocks and hard falls in the 8 a.m. event but no one was gored by the beasts, a frequent feature of the spectacle.

The festival attracts hundreds of thousands of tourists. Nearly 1.7 million peo-

ple visited Pamplona for the celebrations in 2022, and forecasts are higher for this year with all COVID-19 constraints ended.

In the run, six bulls guided by six tame oxen charged along a route through Pamplona's streets for around two minutes and 30 seconds before reaching the bull ring.

The festival was made famous by Ernest Hemingway's 1926 novel "The Sun Also Rises." This year marks the 100th anniversary of Hemingway's first visit to

the festival.

Friday's run was the first of eight scheduled. The rest of day usually includes massive sessions of drinking, eating and attending cultural events.

Four runners were gored in the festival last year. Sixteen people have died in bull runs since 1910, most recently in 2009.

The bulls that run each morning are killed in the afternoon by professional bullfighters.

Animal rights activists annually campaign against the



La Pamosilla's fighting bulls run among revellers during the first day of the running of the bulls during the San Fermin fiestas in Pamplona, Spain, Friday, July 7, 2023.

Associated Press

festival, claiming it is cruel to animals.

Destino Navarra, an official tour guide group, said visi-

tors from United States and Canada represent 70% of its total bookings for this year's festival. □

Helpful tips for your stay on Aruba

(Oranjestad)—When traveling to another country, especially for the first time, it is always better to be over-prepared than under-prepared. That is why we have a list of basic—but important—information that we think may come in handy to Aruba's visitors.

Emergency services

Even though most people don't even want to think about having to contact emergency services—especially not while on their vacation, it is still important to know what number to dial in case of the unlikely event of an accident or severe incident.

Police: 100
Police Tipline: 11141
Ambulance: 911
Fire Dept: 115
Oranjestad: HOH hospital: +297-527-4000
San Nicolas: ImSan: +297-527-8833

Electrical power

Aruba generally operates on 110V to 127V supply voltage and 60Hz. There are also three types of outlets used on the island: type A with two flat prongs; type B with two flat and one grounding prong, and on occasion, type F with two round prong and two earth clips on the side. However, Type A is most commonly found in homes and estab-

lishments.

Drinking water

The water that flows through the sinks of every house, hotels and other establishments is distilled and perfectly safe to drink. Aruba's drinking water exceeds WHO's international standards for water quality, so there is no need to buy bottled water from the store.

Supermarket hours

Supermarket hours may vary depending on where you are staying on the island. Generally though, most supermarkets are open from 8am to 9 or 10pm, Monday through

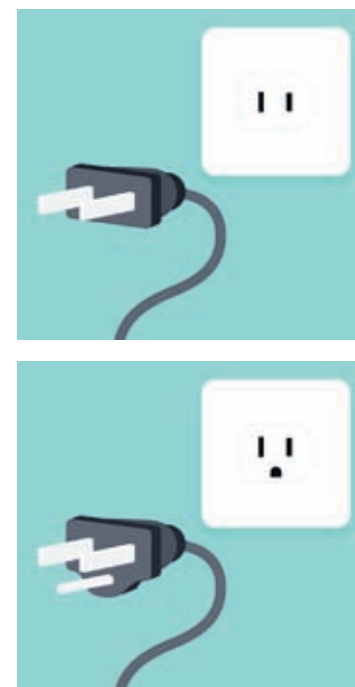
Saturday. On Sundays, supermarkets generally close earlier; mostly around 2pm.

Taxis

Prices for taxi fair are set by the Department of Public Traffic and are based on destination rather than mileage. Most taxis can take up to five passengers, but this may vary depending on the vehicle. Taxis are pretty much always available and you can ever hire one for \$45 an hour.

Safety

Aruba is one of the safest islands in the Caribbean, and many tourist that visit have often told us how they feel safe to explore



the island or walk around at night. However, rare incidents do occur, so keep yourself and your belongings safe. □

Aruba's most family-friendly beaches

(Oranjestad)—One of the biggest concerns that parents have when travelling with their children is a guarantee of their safety and healthy enjoyment. Therefore, we thought it would be a great help to travelling parents to list off some of the most family-friendly beaches around the island.

Baby Beach in San Nicolas

Baby Beach is one of Aruba's most popular and visited beaches, and for good reason: This sandy and quiet lagoon is a great place for parents to sit back and relax while their children play in the shallow shores of the beach. Beside the relaxing atmosphere, there are also several services that may accommodate your stay, like a parking lot, sun tent rentals, chairs, bathrooms and a snack bar right at the far left of the beach.

Mangel Halto in Pos Chiquito

Mangel Halto is situated in the back streets of the Pos Chiquito city. Though there are several stairs on the sides of the beach cliff leading you down, the best spot for families to hang out is across the bridge, passed the mangrove trees near the entrance sign.

Here, there are small and big palapas, perfect for big and small families to set up their belongings. In this area, the shore is also shallow, falling right around your knee before slowly getting deeper: perfect for kids to safely play.

Eagle Beach/Palm Beach in the hotel area

Yet another highly popular beach site, Eagle Beach and Palm Beach is where

most of our visitors go to tan, swim or play in the white sand. Because they are near the low-rise and high-rise hotel areas, these beaches are the most accessible for visitors on foot. These beaches also offer many palapas free to use, but you can also rent chairs and tents. Much like Baby Beach, these sites are one of the best beaches for your children to play and build sand castles.

Boca Catalina in Malmok

Boca Catalina is a small bay beach near the Malmok beach area further down the hotel areas. Though it may not be a very sandy beach, it is relatively quiet and tranquil. This is a great place for family to lay down a big blanket and have a little picnic. This is also one of the best places to snorkel, as this area is filled with little fish and corals,

even close to the shore.

Palm Island

Ok, this one is technically not a beach, but a must-visit attraction for family fun. This small water park oasis is located further down the Mangel Halto Beach and is reachable by boat. This water park offers 6 hours of fun activities, food, drinks, and a chance to see pink flamingoes up close! □



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How it all began

It was 1938 when Mr. Eric Ponson started his journey at General Store. Ponson did not hesitate and decided to buy General Store. Buying a store and thus going from employee to owner of a business with a debt of 11.000 guilders was not an easy task.

As the saying goes: "Behind every successful man, is a strong

woman". In the case of Ponson, this was no different. As General Store progressed and slowly became successful, Mrs. Irene Ponson, came in to assist her husband. Irene Ponson is a visionary, she knew exactly where and how to invest and within a short amount of time in 1970, General Store moved to a better location at the Steenweg. This allowed for a lot more merchandise, products and employees. Supply and demand was as such, that General Store became the number 1 electrical business. Business kept going so well that the location at the Steenweg became too small and was moved later to Dakota Shopping Paradise and later to Pedro Gallego Straat. With this move, an expansion was decided upon and an electronics

store in Savaneta was opened. General Store still being very successful was ready for more growth.

Ricky, Kenneth, Corine and Frans are the fruits of this marriage. Kenneth and Frans however, decided to further develop their father's legacy and continued with their mother's dream to expand the business. An expansion not in square feet only, but in merchandise as well. A great opportunity presented itself when the Ponson family was able to buy a piece of property across from the airport. In 2007 the Ponson family moved into their brand new and huge building

After a successful opening and expansion, Kenneth and Frans who inherited their mother's vision, decided that General Store was ready for yet another expansion. With the support of Mr. Tom Barfell and management of Do it Best in the States, the construction of Do it Center commenced.

Fast forward to today. A Do it Center in Aruba, with more than 50.000 top of the line items for interior as well exterior use, building materials, STO products and a top of the line grocery store. Perseverance, responsibility, vision and the courage to invest have made Ponson's General Store as successful as it is today.

Super Do It Center Shaba & Groceries

Located in Shaba, Noord. This is the last sibling of the Do It Center family. Here you will be able to find anything you are looking for. The building is divided into several departments from home to hardware to groceries. Everything under one roof.

Groceries? Visit the fully stocked supermarket with fresh fruits and vegetables and high class meat selections. Highly known products and brands are here for you to grab. Every week Do It Center Groceries offers its weekly special on selected items. Weekly specials are very popular and a perfect chance for you to buy your favorite products at a reduced price.

Need a home makeover?

Do not skip the furniture department "Leenbakker". Here, you will find a divine collection of European furniture, worldwide known for their modern and stylish features for your bedroom, bathroom, living room or kitchen. For your garden they have a wide selection of durable furniture specially made for our tropical climate. Take a walk around and find some treasures. Find the perfect accessory for your house, fitted for your personality and style. Modern, elegant, retro industrial, whatever your style is you will definitely find something for your personal taste.

Do it Center Shaba is open from Monday to Saturday from 8AM to 8PM and on Sunday's from 9AM to 6PM.

For more information go to www.doit.aw. ☐



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Visit the natural bridges of Aruba!

(Oranjestad)—After you've visited the Alto Vista Church, the Bushiribana Gold Mill Ruins and the mini natural pool that is located right next to it, you're next up around the northern coast line must be the Natural Bridge. Once the largest natural bridge in the Caribbean, this bridge has been a tourist attraction for many years.



The Baby Natural Bridge



Current state of the Natural Bridge

The bridge was formed during thousands of years, cut and crafted by the wild waves that crash into the coral stone walls of the coast. Before its collapse, this bridge measured 30 meters in length and 7 meters in height, making it the biggest natural bridge in the Caribbean at the time. For many years, this site was also a frequently visited



The Natural Bridge pre-collapse

beach, as the bridge had a small opening through which the water would flow into the tiny beach.

Unfortunately in 2005, the bridge collapsed, and the little beach dried up. Despite this, this site remained a tourist attraction, with many visitors walking along the coral cliffs of the bridge to see the spectacular view

of the northern coastline and the Caribbean Sea. Visitors can also still visit the souvenir shop on the left of the bridge entrance.

While the natural bridge no longer is functional, there is now a smaller natural bridge very close. This bridge is often called the "Baby Bridge" or "Daughter Bridge". □

Aruba to me

ORANJESTAD — You are back and we would like to portrait you! By inviting you to send us your favorite vacation picture while enjoying our Happy Island.

Complete the sentence: Aruba to me is Send your picture with that text (including your name and where you are from) to: news@arubatoday.com and we will publish your vacation memory. Isn't that a special way to keep your best moments alive? Please do note: By submitting photos, text or any other materials, you give permission to The Aruba Today Newspaper, Caribbean Speed Printers and any of its affiliated companies to use said materials, as well as names, likeness, etc. for promotional purposes without compensation.

Last but not least: check out our website, Instagram and Facebook page! Thank you for supporting our free newspaper, we strive to make you a happy reader every



day again.

For today we received a lovely message from Robert Spencer from New Jersey.

He wrote to us saying; "Aruba to me.. Is

a place I was taken as a child, and where I now take my children.

My family loves this Island because it is family friendly, has incredible beaches and restaurants, and

has perfect weather year round.'

Thank you for sending us this wonderful message sharing what Aruba means to you with us and our readers! □

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Episode 15 Petroglyphs of Siribana SantaCruz - Aruba

Long before writing was developed, people recorded events, ideas, plans, and feelings by marking them on a rock. Sometimes they carved into the stone. Sometimes they scratched off a surface coating. Sometimes they painted on the rocks. The method that they used was typically determined by the availability of color pigments to be used as paint, the hardness of the rocks, and the availability of tools that could be used to produce their message.

All of these markings are referred to as "Rock Art." People worldwide have been producing rock art for thousands of years. Some of their messages can still be seen today. The oldest are usually found in rock shelters and caves where they are protected from the wind, rain, salt and sun light. However, in arid climates as ours some examples of rock art have persisted for ten to fifteen thousand years, depending upon

how the art was produced, the direction that it faces, and the type of rock used as a "canvas." There are two basic types of rock art at this particular site, petroglyphs and pictographs. Petroglyph is an image that is carved into a rock.

This "carving" can produce a visible indentation in the rock, or it can simply be the scratching away of a weathered surface to reveal unweathered rock of a different color below. The two headed deity of the legendary twins is carved into pinkish granite exposing the more gray colored stone, shown here near the top of this article is one of the Siribana site petroglyph. The prehistoric artist must have scratched the surface of the rock with probably a lithic tool. This work produced an indentation in the rock and also exposed an unweathered material of lighter color below.

This next petroglyphs



shown, is a recurring design of which we find back on various sites on the Island and elsewhere, whether as pictograph or like here as a petroglyph. This drawing is referred to, as a portal design, a door way a hole in the sky in which you could be transported in to the spiritual world. Siribana rock formation that lies some 1500 meters north-east of the Catholic Church of Santa Cruz, it's very beautiful and in the open air place where starry nights and full moons assemblies were held, honoring the sky spirits. It does not show many big Batholith boulders

upon the surface as at other sites illustrated in our previous articles.

However these boulders are present, but not visible since most of them are under ground level and what we can observe is merely the tips or heads of the emerging boulders out of the ground level. Siribana is the only known site that we can depict Petroglyph on the whole island. Petroglyphs, as described earlier are designs that have been scratched, carved or chiseled on the rock surface, exposing the less weathered rock, in this case lighter colored stone, which on its part gives the expression its contrast. A stone that has been long exposed to the elements tends to have form a different outer layer or crust color. The particular incision in this rock looks very similar to one pictograph representing the Hopi Bow clan, keepers of the fire in Arizona, United States. However we did not receive confirmation till now, whether this carving shown on this picture above was considered to be recent carving by modern Arubans or that it has

been completely ignored by experts.

During the course of a few decades, this site has become almost impossible to reach. This due to the less hospitable conditions that have formed in relation to former access routes for visitors. A very difficult terrain to it has become when going up from the southern road for the less experienced outdoors men. Thick xerophytic vegetation has been covering a great part of what used to be old paths use by the natives to climb up to these mystical grounds since bay gone times. The vegetation has taking over wherever it could. This phenomenon, of xenophiles over growth has become a great problem and very much covered by this big thorny Acacia shrub known locally as Hubada. Pap. "Who-bâ-da" Acacia turtuosa Lin. This Acacia, together with a list of introduced and invasive plants and animals are doing irreversible harm to our fragile ecosystem.

Source; Island Insight column
by Etnia Nativa.



Unique fauna of Aruba

For a small island, Aruba sure has a lot of unique treasures. Among these, we have some subspecies of animals that are unique to our island. These have evolved to perfectly adapt to our desert climate and make Aruba their home. At the same time, they are part of what makes Aruba truly one of a kind.

Cascabel (rattlesnake, *Crotalus durissus unicolor*)

According to the Arikok National Park, Aruba knows two kinds of snakes, the Santanero and the Cascabel. The cascabel belongs to the rattlesnake family. The cascabel is the only venomous snake from Aruba. It has a length of 65cm to 100cm, and is about 4 to 5cm wide. Its color varies from light brown to grey-brown, and its underbelly is white. On its back there are marks that are a little darker, in the shape of diamonds.

Its reproduction is oviparous, meaning the offspring can hatch from their eggs just before, during or immediately after laying.

The cascabel lives mainly in the Arikok National Park. It likes to live in dark places, and is thus found hidden among the limestone rocks and under stones. As a defense mechanism, the cascabel uses its rattle as a warning, and it is not an aggressive animal.

The cascabel feeds on lizards, small mammals such as rats and mice. It paralyzes or kills its prey with its venom, which is injected through a bite. The enemies of the cascabel are donkeys, goats, humans and cars. Humans are the biggest enemy of the cascabel, as they kill them and destroy their habitat for urbanization.

Shoco (burrowing owl, *Athene cunicularia arubensis*)

The shoco is a small bird which is seldom seen. They are active during the day but are more active later in the day and at night for hunting. These owls have very good night vision and very good hearing. The shoco is the national symbol of Aruba.

The shoco has about 20cm of length, and the females are slightly heavier than the males. They are light brown in color, with many white spots. The belly of the Shoco is either white or light brown, and the shoco has striking yellow eyes. Its beak is yellow/green. Young owls do not have white spots and are lighter in color.

The nest of the shoco is a burrow in the ground. If the shoco cannot find a burrow, it will dig one in soft soil. The shoco lays one or two eggs every other day until all the eggs are laid – a shoco can lay up to four eggs. The first owlets hatch after three to four weeks. The shoco owl takes care of the owlets for three months until they leave the nest. Only a few owlets survive.

The owls dig burrows in the ground with low grass vegetation. An owl can live up to nine years.

Its defense mechanism is simply to fly away or retreat to its burrows. They eat mostly insects, mice and lizards, and the main threats to their survival are boas – an invasive species introduced by humans as pets – and humans through destruction of their habitat.

Prikichi (parakeet, *Aratinga pertinax*)

The Prikichi is the national bird of Aruba. On Aruba,

Bonaire, and Curaçao, parakeets can be found, but each of the three islands has a different breed. The Yellow-shouldered Amazon parakeet that we have on Aruba is also found along the coast of Venezuela. Unfortunately, there is interbreeding between the breeds due to cage birds from, for example, Curaçao being released on Aruba. The parakeet population on Aruba is in danger due to extensive deforestation occurring on the island because of the growing population.

The prikichi weighs between 90 to 100 grams. It has a greenish-brown head with some yellow around the eye. The back and wings of the parakeet are dark green, and the underside of the body is a lighter shade of green. There is also a bit of blue in the wings. The parakeet's beak is gray/black.

Parakeets often use termite nests as breeding sites. Parakeets are found in all natural environments (mondi) of the island. It defends itself by flying away and loud cries. Parakeets eat seeds from the pods of the Kwihi tree, Divi Divi, and columnar cactus. They also consume natural fruits. Its main predators are boa constrictors, humans.

Conew (cottontail rabbit, *Sylvilagus floridanus nigronuchalis*)

The Eastern Cottontail rabbit (*Sylvilagus floridanus*) was probably brought over to the island by Indian settlers thousands of years ago as a source of food. This rabbit, locally known as Conew, has spread all over the island and has become part of our ecosystem. The very adaptable Conew can live in a wide variety of habitats, including Aruba's xeric scrublands, where it typically grazes on weeds and grasses.

The Aruban Conew has a brownish grey color and a distinctive white belly. This white fur extends to the bottom of the tail which becomes visible as the rabbit runs. These rabbits can grow up to approximately 40 centimeters in length over their short lifespan of 3 years. Cottontail rabbits reach reproductive maturity when they are just 2 to 3 months old. A female rabbit, called a doe, finds a suitable nest spot under a shrub or rocks and lines it with fur. She can have an average of 3 to 4 litters per year averaging 5 young each. The doe only visits her young once or twice a day to nurse her babies for a period of 2 to 3 weeks. The young reach independence at 4 to 5 weeks.

The Aruban Conew is an endangered species and protected by Aruban law. The Conew is thought to have drastically declined due to an increase in human activities, habitat fragmentation and predation by the invasive Boa constrictor as well as feral cats and dogs. However, recently there seem to be more rabbit sightings in rural and wilderness areas and also in the National Park. This could be linked to a recent decline of the invasive Boa population after the long period of drought. As the Conew can reproduce very quickly, a short break in predation pressure can lead to a fast increase of rabbits. Sadly, the Boas are back on the rise again with the truly wet rainy seasons we have recently experienced. This could cause a new decline in the Conew population that was just starting to recover.

These are but a few of Aruba's beautiful inhabitant, which we must all contribute to protect. For more information, visit <https://www.arubanationalpark.org/main/flora-fauna/>



CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS 44 Color

1 Green stone

5 Calls on
9 Tinseltown setting

10 Fabric bundles

12 Cover words

13 Admit (to)

14 West Indies island

16 Wedding words

17 Original

18 Composer Salieri

20 Inundates

22 Day divider

23 Moral code

25 Fencing weapon

28 "Hold on ..."

32 Stag's pride

34 Mess up

35 School setting

36 Insect feature

38 Mah-jongg pieces

40 John of Plymouth

41 Pizzeria buy

42 Racket

43 Falls back

DOWN

1 Door

frame maker

2 Play part

3 Famed surrealist

4 Swanky

5 Wolf pack member

6 Scatter seeds

7 Weather-changing current

8 Painter's place

9 Flea market unit

11 Tea stirrer

T	A	C	T		P	A	C	E	
A	M	O	U	R	A	L	O	N	G
L	U	N	G	E	R	A	N	D	Y
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D	O	L	L		D	O	W	N	S
E	T	A		D	E	F	E	A	T
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I	L	I	A	D		A	S	I	A
S	L	O	P	E		R	H	O	N
	O	N	E	S		E	N	D	S

Yesterday's answer

15	Like the strong	27	Roma's land
16	Samson	29	Remit
19	Formerly	30	Composer Bloch
21	Healthy	31	Origami bird
24	Blink of an eye	33	Lets up
25	Extreme diets	37	"The Time Machine"
26	"The Iceman Cometh" playwright	39	Heart chart, for short

	1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8	
9						10				11
12						13				
14					15			16		
17				18			19			
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38			39			40				
41						42				
	43					44				

7-8

A X Y D I B A A X R
is L O N G F E L L O W

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three U's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

7-8

CRYPTOQUOTE

C V F N L P V Q U K G E ' Z U Y D D

B V F W F Z P C B Z G U L

G K C G E K L ? — X C B D D Y N

HY D D L Q

Yesterday's Cryptoquote: MEN CAN STARVE FROM A LACK OF SELF-REALIZATION AS MUCH AS THEY CAN FROM A LACK OF BREAD. — RICHARD WRIGHT

Millennial Money: You're not too young to make a will

By DALIA RAMIREZ of Nerd-Wallet

Making a will isn't a task just for the old and wealthy. It's also for the well-prepared. Recent years serve as a heavy reminder that you might not know when your last days are. Life expectancy in the U.S. dropped in both 2020 and 2021, driven by COVID-19 deaths and an increase in accidental deaths, according to the most recent data available from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Over 1 million people in the U.S. have died of COVID-19, according to the CDC. And in 2021, accidents or unintentional injuries were the fourth leading cause of death in the U.S., the organization found. It's unlikely that you'll die young. But if the unexpected happens, having a will in place even if it feels like you don't need one can be a simple way to avoid leaving important deci-



A couple walk along New Brighton Beach at sunset in Christchurch, New Zealand, Tuesday, June 9, 2020.

Associated Press

sions about your assets and guardianship wishes to your state's laws and courts. It doesn't have to cost thousands of dollars, either.

WHAT CAN HAPPEN IF YOU DON'T HAVE A WILL

If you don't have a will called "dying intestate" your assets are distributed by a probate court according to your state's laws of intestacy. Going through probate without a will can be a longer, more complicated process, as inheritors

must file a petition to make a claim to the assets. Intestacy laws vary among states, but they generally prioritize close family members, such as spouses, children, parents and siblings, as beneficiaries. If you don't have a will, "funds can wind up in the hands of unintended recipients," says Regina Kiperman, managing attorney at estate planning law firm RK Law PC in New York. □

Caribbean leaders criticize U.S. sanctions against Venezuela



United States Secretary of State Antony Blinken, center, plays a steel pan accompanied by musician Len 'Boogsie' Sharpe, left, and Hakeem Jeffries, Minority Leader of the U.S. House of Representatives, right, at the HADCO Phase II Pan Groove pan yard in Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, Wednesday, July 5, 2023.

Associated Press

By BERT WILKINSON

Associated Press

GEORGETOWN, Guyana (AP) — Caribbean leaders on Friday denounced U.S. economic sanctions against oil-rich Venezuela, saying they've been forced to buy costlier petroleum elsewhere as they struggle with tight budgets.

Members of a Caribbean trade bloc known as Caricom called for removal of the sanctions, which prevent them from purchasing oil at a discounted rate as part of a deal with Venezuela known as Petrocaribe. "We in the Caribbean are suffering immensely,"

Dominica Prime Minister Roosevelt Skerit said at the close of a three-day Caricom conference on Wednesday. "People should be allowed to go about their lives, especially in these difficult times." □

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24/7

Twitter threatens legal action against Meta over its new rival app Threads



This photo, taken in New York, Thursday, July 6, 2023, shows Meta's new app Threads.

Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Twitter has threatened legal action against Meta over its new text-based app called Threads, which has drawn tens of millions of users since launching this week as a rival to Elon Musk's social media platform. In a letter Wednesday to Meta CEO Mark Zuckerberg, Alex Spiro, an attorney representing Twitter, accused Meta of unlawfully using Twitter's trade secrets and other intellectual property by hiring former Twitter employees to create a "copycat" app. The move ramps up the tensions between the social media giants after Threads debuted Wednesday, targeting those who are seeking out alterna-

tives to Twitter amid unpopular changes Musk has made to the platform since buying it last year for \$44 billion. Meta spokesperson Andy Stone wrote Thursday on Threads: "No one on the Threads engineering team is a former Twitter employee that's just not a thing." In the letter, which news website Semafor first reported Thursday, Spiro said Twitter "intends to strictly enforce its intellectual property rights" and noted the company's right to seek civil remedies or a court injunction. He said the letter marked a "formal notice" for Meta to preserve documents relevant for a potential dispute between the companies.

In a reply to a tweet about the possibility of legal action against Meta, Musk wrote: "Competition is fine, cheating is not." The Associated Press reached out to Spiro on Thursday for further information. Twitter responded to an email seeking comment with a crude automated reply, its standard response to journalists. New Twitter CEO Linda Yaccarino has not publicly commented on the letter but appeared to address Threads' launch. "We're often imitated but the Twitter community can never be duplicated," Yaccarino tweeted. Some analysts say Meta's new offering, billed as a text-based version of the photo-sharing app Instagram, could be a significant headache for Twitter pointing to the excitement surrounding Threads' launch and impressive download numbers so far.

But success isn't guaranteed. Industry watchers point to Meta's track record of starting stand-alone apps that were later shut down and note that Threads is still in its early days. Besides some glitches and gripes about missing features, Meta's new app also has raised data privacy concerns. □



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Marriott Aruba Ocean Club PLATINUM SEASON

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1 Bed Ocean View \$14,500

GOLD SEASON

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Philipsen secures hat trick of Tour de France stage wins

BORDEAUX, France (AP) —

It was not so long ago that Jasper Philipsen was nicknamed "Jasper Disaster." In the space of a week at the Tour de France, he has morphed into "Jasper The Master," dominating the sprints with ease.

The Belgian rider secured a hat trick of stages on Friday by claiming yet another mass sprint in Bordeaux. Philipsen was expertly led to the front by his Alpecin-Deceuninck teammate Mathieu van der Poel then comfortably countered a move by veteran sprinter Mark Cavendish.

Biniam Girmay completed the stage podium, and defending champion Jonas Vingegaard kept the yellow jersey.

Philipsen has won five mass sprints in a row on the Tour after claiming two stage wins last year.

"If you told me this one week ago I would think you're crazy, but so far it's a dream for us, a dream Tour and we just continue and hopefully we can add another one," Philipsen said. "I think from now I'm looking to Paris also."

Philipsen was given the nickname by Alexander Kristoff when they raced to-



Belgium's Jasper Philipsen celebrates as he crosses the finish line to win the seventh stage of the Tour de France cycling race over 170 kilometers (105.5 miles) with start in Mont-de-Marsan and finish in Bordeaux, France, Friday, July 7, 2023.

Associated Press

gether because he caused a lot of crashes.

"Then he was a little clumsy. And he also forgot a lot of things," Kristoff told Het Laatste Nieuws. "Then he lost his sunglasses, or couldn't find his toiletry bag, or forgot his shoes. He was often a disaster, a disaster. The nickname was meant as a joke, not an insult." Philipsen made no such mistake when Caven-

dish hit the front in the finale. He calmly returned onto his wheel and overtook Cavendish to deny the rider known as the "Manx Missile" a record 35th Tour stage win.

Cavendish equaled Merckx's record of 34 wins on the 2021 Tour, 13 years after his first success. Cavendish, who has never won the Tour, unlike five-time champion Merckx, will retire at

the end of the season.

"He (Cavendish) was really strong and I would have also loved to have seen him win, and I think everybody," Philipsen said. "He's up there, in good condition."

After two grueling days of brutal climbing across the Pyrenees, the super flat 170-kilometer (105-mile) Stage 7 looked like the perfect occasion for the main

contenders to enjoy a day off inside the peloton.

And they made the most of it to relax.

Vingegaard waved to TV cameras and blew kisses to fans, while second-placed Tadej Pogacar chatted with Van der Poel on the long sections across the Landes forest. On a very hot day in southwestern France, Van der Poel and Philipsen put ice cubes in their jerseys.

After their epic duel over the past couple of days in the Pyrenees, Vingegaard and Pogacar were happy to rest their legs but remain vigilant in the last 30 kilometers when the race animated ahead of the final sprint. There was no major changes in the general classification: Vingegaard kept his 25-second lead over the two-time champion. Jai Hindley remained in third place, 1 minute, 34 seconds off the pace. It was a bit unclear at the start of the stage whether the breakaway ignited by the quartet of Simon Guglielmi, Nelson Oliveira, Mathieu Burgaudeau and Jonas Abrahamsen would grow bigger, but no other rider looked interested in joining their collective effort. □

Lillard hoping that Summer League gives Blazers and Heat chance to talk trade

By TIM REYNOLDS
AP Basketball Writer

LAS VEGAS (AP) — Damian Lillard's position has not and will not change: The

seven-time All-Star wants to be traded to the Miami Heat.

Lillard's agent, Aaron Goodwin, confirmed that



Portland Trail Blazers guard Damian Lillard brings the ball up against the New York Knicks during the second half of an NBA basketball game in Portland, Ore., Tuesday, March 14, 2023.

Associated Press

stance Thursday and said he hopes that the Portland Trail Blazers the team that Lillard has spent the entirety of his 11-year NBA career with can engage with the Heat on steps toward a deal in the coming days, especially with virtually everyone from the NBA gathering in Las Vegas for Summer League that starts on Friday.

The Trail Blazers publicly revealed this past weekend that Lillard had asked for a trade, an announcement that ended weeks of speculation about his future in Portland. Lillard had told the team that he wanted a chance to contend for a title; the Blazers have won

only four playoff series in his 11 seasons and missed the playoffs in each of the last two years by wide margins. "I'm hopeful that at least talks will initiate since they're all going to be in one place," Goodwin said. "That's my hope."

It will obviously take a significant package of players and picks to make any trade happen. Lillard will make almost \$46 million this coming season and could make as much as \$216 million over the next four years if he exercises his option for the 2026-27 season.

"The solution comes in Miami actually having a chance to sit down and talk with Portland," Good-

win said. "I think if they can ever sit down and get in a room, there could be a deal to be made."

Lillard averaged 32.2 points this past season, has averaged at least 24 points in each of the last eight seasons, and has an offensive ignitability that few players in the NBA possess.

He became just the seventh player in NBA history to score more than 70 points in a game when he finished with 71 against the Houston Rockets on Feb. 26. The other names on that list: Wilt Chamberlain (who did it five times), Kobe Bryant, David Thompson, David Robinson, Elgin Baylor and Donovan Mitchell. □

Andy Murray exits Wimbledon with uncertainty after loss to Stefanos Tsitsipas

By **HOWARD FENDRICH**

AP Tennis Writer

WIMBLEDON, England (AP)

— Andy Murray didn't know.

As he was asked to dissect his loss to Stefanos Tsitsipas in the second round of Wimbledon a rollicking five-setter that lasted more than 4 1/2 hours spread over two days before a packed Centre Court filled with thousands of his closest and loudest friends Murray started answers to question after question at his news conference Friday with some variation of that theme.

It was, likely, a verbal crutch, something used to gather his thoughts before offering a more complete response. It also embodied the uncertainty that seems to surround a former No. 1 player who owns three Grand Slam titles, two at the All England Club, but also is now 36 and with an artificial hip after two operations. Was it harder to accept this 7-6 (3), 6-7 (2), 4-6, 7-6 (3), 6-4 defeat, given both how close it was and all he's been through? "I don't know, to be honest," Murray's reply began.

Did the match change because it was suspended Thursday at 10:40 p.m., right after he'd taken a two-sets-to-one lead, because rules prevent play after 11 p.m.? "I don't know, to



Britain's Andy Murray returns to Stefanos Tsitsipas of Greece in a men's singles match on day five of the Wimbledon tennis championships in London, Friday, July 7, 2023.

Associated Press

be honest."How frustrating was it that the contest was put on hold for nearly 18 hours? "Well, you never know what would have happened." Does the player ahead in that circumstance want to keep playing, while the player trailing prefers to stop? "I don't know." Will he return to Wimbledon next year? "I don't know."

"I'm obviously very disappointed just now. You never know how many opportunities you're going to get to play here," Murray said. "The defeats, maybe feel a bit tougher. But, to be honest, every year that Wim-

bledon's not gone how I would like, it's been hard." This was his second consecutive exit in the second round at the site of three of his greatest triumphs: the 2012 Olympic gold medal and the 2013 and 2016 Wimbledon championships. His trophy a decade ago was the first for a British man at the All England Club in singles in 77 years. Murray has not been past the third round at any major since getting to the 2017 quarterfinals at Wimbledon. "I mean, ultimately this was an opportunity for me. I had a good chance of having a proper run for the

first time in a long time at a Slam. I didn't take it," he said, and bit on the collar of his white T-shirt.

On the point before action was halted Thursday, Murray slipped and fell at the baseline. He called it "jarring" and said he felt some "initial pain and discomfort," but would not characterize it as an injury and said he was OK when action resumed Friday.

"It's never easy against Andy. I know everyone loves him here," said the No. 5-seeded Tsitsipas, a two-time runner-up at majors, including at the Australian Open in January.

All in all, Friday was rough for the local fans: The other two British men left in the bracket, No. 12 Cam Norrie and wild-card entry Liam Broady, were sent home, too. Norrie was defeated by Chris Eubanks of the United States 6-3, 3-6, 6-2, 7-6 (3), and Broady lost to No. 26 Denis Shapovalov of Canada 4-6, 6-2, 7-5, 7-5. In other men's results, No. 1 Carlos Alcaraz and No. 3 Daniil Medvedev reached the third round, while No. 7 Andrey Rublev and No. 8 Jannik Sinner both got to the fourth. Novak Djokovic, seeking a fifth title in a row at Wimbledon and eighth overall, was scheduled to face Stan Wawrinka in the third round later. The No. 1 woman, Iga Swiatek, made her way into the fourth round she's never been further at the All England Club as did No. 4 Jessica Pegula; 2022 runner-up Ons Jabeur moved into the third round. Because it was so late by the time Murray and Tsitsipas took the court Thursday, the retractable roof was closed. It was open Friday afternoon: After so much rain earlier in the week, the pale blue sky was unencumbered by clouds, and some folks sitting on the side of the stadium blanketed by sun flapped fans with the temperature at 85 degrees Fahrenheit (30 degrees Celsius). □

Texas Rangers have 5 All-Star starters after García added



Texas Rangers' Adolis Garcia jogs around the bases after hitting a solo home run in the bottom of the seventh inning in a baseball game against the Houston Astros in Arlington, Texas, Monday, July 3, 2023.

Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Texas will become the first team in 47 years to have five position players start in the All-Star Game after the Rangers' Adolis García and the Baltimore Orioles Austin Hays were picked Friday to join the American League lineup as injury replacements.

The pair take over from the New York Yankees' Aaron Judge and the Los Angeles Angels' Mike Trout.

García joins Rangers catcher Jonah Heim, second baseman Marcus Semien, shortstop Corey Seager and third baseman Josh Jung in the AL lineup for Tuesday's game at Seattle.

The non-Rangers are Tampa Bay first baseman Yandy Díaz and outfielder Randy Arozarena, Angels designated hitter Shohei Ohtani and Hays.










The only other teams with five position players to start the All-Star Game were the 1939 Yankees and the 1956, 1957 and 1976 Reds.

Judge hasn't played since tearing a ligament in his right big toe on June 3 while crashing into a fence while making a catch at Dodger Stadium.

Trout broke his left wrist fouling off a pitch on Monday and had surgery Wednesday. □

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